

HIROAKI SAMURA

Chapter 25

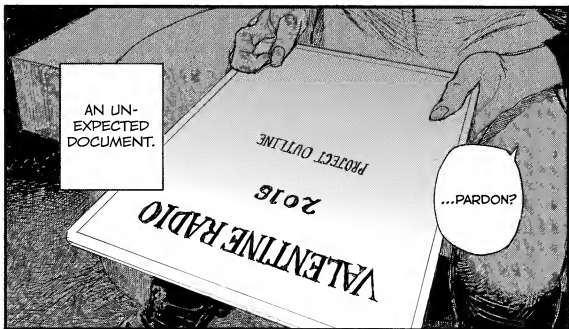
THE PARTY GOES ON.

wave
LISTEN TO ME!



AN UN-
EXPECTED
ATTACK OF
CHARACTER.

YOU'RE
THE KIND OF
NARCISSISTIC
PERSON WHO'S
ONLY INTERESTED
IN YOURSELF,
RIGHT?



AN UN-
EXPECTED
DOCUMENT.

...PARDON?

THE
STORY
SO
FAR

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF MATO, AN FM STATION WORKER, MINARE KODA HAS MADE HER DEBUT AS A RADIO DJ. ONE DAY, A MAN LIVING IN THE SAME APARTMENT COMPLEX AS HER REACHES OUT TO THE STATION, CLAIMING THAT HE'S BEING HAUNTED BY A GHOST. MINARE FINDS BUNDLES OF ROTTING MEAT ABOVE HIS APARTMENT AND CALLS THE POLICE ON HIM, ONLY TO LATER BE FORCED TO APOLOGIZE WHEN SHE LEARNS THAT SAID MEAT WAS DISCARDED BY HER. NOW, SHE'S BEEN CALLED OUT BY CHISHIRO, A SENIOR DJ.



WHICH
WOULD YOU
RATHER I
EXPLAIN
FIRST?

ACTUALLY,
THERE'S
A LOT I
WANNA ASK
ABOUT!

ALSO,
WHAT'S
WITH
THIS
FILE?!

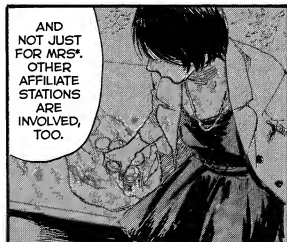
WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN BY
THAT?

I
CAN-
NOT!

LET
THAT
SLIDE,

UH...
THE
FILE,
PLEASE.

IS
THAT
YOUR
YODA
IMPER-
SON-
ATION?



AND
NOT JUST
FOR MRS*.
OTHER
AFFILIATE
STATIONS
ARE
INVOLVED,
TOO.



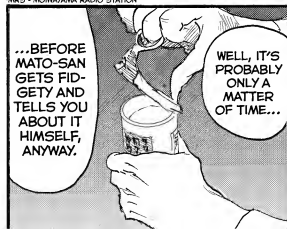
...IS
A BIG
EVENT
SCHED-
ULED
FOR
FEBRU-
ARY NEXT
YEAR.

AS
THE
NAME
IMPLIES,
VALENTINE
RADIO...

VALENTINE RADIO

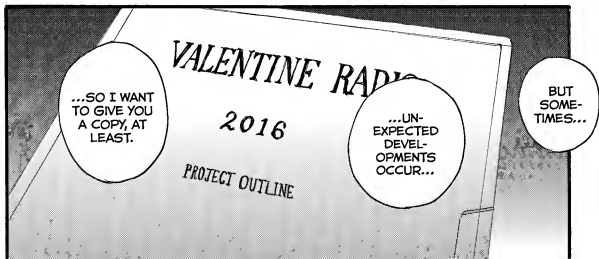
2016

PROJECT OUTLINE



...BEFORE
MATO-SAN
GETS FID-
GETY AND
TELLS YOU
ABOUT IT
HIMSELF,
ANYWAY.

WELL, IT'S
PROBABLY
ONLY A
MATTER
OF TIME...





NO,
REALLY,
WHY THE
ANASTRO-
PHE?

...I SURELY
CANNOT.

AND? WHAT
DID YOU MEAN
ABOUT ME
ONLY BEING
INTERESTING
IN MYSELF?

TURN A
DEAF EAR
TO THAT...



I JUST
WASN'T
EXPECT-
ING YOU
TO COM-
PLIMENT
ME.

oh...



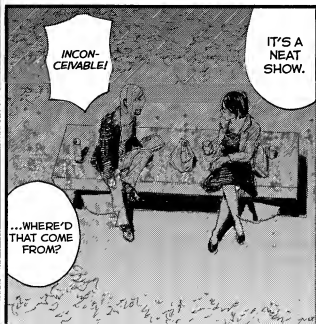
I'VE
LISTENED
TO ALL
THREE
RECORD-
INGS.

YOUR
SHOW,
WAVE,
LISTEN TO
ME, WAS
IT?



BUT...

I REALLY
DO THINK
IT WAS
ENTER-
TAINING.



INCON-
CEIVABLE!

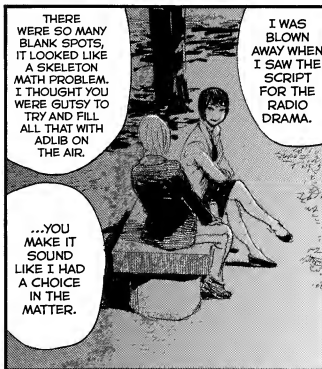
IT'S A
NEAT
SHOW.

...WHERE'D
THAT COME
FROM?



...BUT
YOUR
OWN.

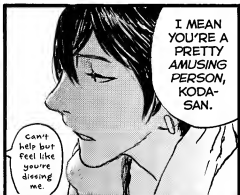
...IT WASN'T
BECAUSE OF
THE CHARM
OF RADIO...



THERE
WERE SO MANY
BLANK SPOTS,
IT LOOKED LIKE
A SKELETON
MATH PROBLEM.
I THOUGHT YOU
WERE GUTSY TO
TRY AND FILL
ALL THAT WITH
ADLIB ON
THE AIR.

I WAS
BLOWN
AWAY WHEN
I SAW THE
SCRIPT FOR THE
RADIO
DRAMA.

...YOU
MAKE IT
SOUND
LIKE I HAD
A CHOICE
IN THE
MATTER.



I MEAN
YOU'RE A
PRETTY
AMUSING
PERSON,
KODA-
SAN.

Can't
help but
feel like
you're
dissing
me.



I DIDN'T
SEE THAT
SHADY-ASS
RESPONSE
COMING!

WELL,
IN MY
CASE...

...I'D PROBABLY
MAKE THE WRITER
REVISE THE WHOLE
SCRIPT BY THREAT-
ENING NOT TO GO
DRINKING WITH HIM
AGAIN.

I BET
YOU'D DO A
WAY BETTER
JOB IF YOU
WERE IN
MY SHOES,
CHISHIRO-
SAN.

BUT
REALLY, MY
SITUATION IS
LIKE BEING
DRIVEN TO
THE EDGE OF
A CLIFF AND
CHOOSING
TO EITHER
THROW MY-
SELF OFF OR
BE GUNNED
DOWN.



NOT SURE
I GET WHAT
YOU MEAN
BY ACTUALLY
INTEREST-
ED...

weird
japanese



BEFORE
THAT, I
SHOULD
ASK,

ARE YOU
ACTUALLY
INTERESTED
IN YOUR
LISTENERS?



SO, NOW
THAT'S
ALL'S
SAID AND
DONE...

...HOW DO
YOU FEEL,
HAVING FINISHED
YOUR FIRST
BROADCAST
AS A RADIO
PERSONALITY?



THE
LISTENERS
ARE TUNING
IN FOR THE
COMEDIAN'S
SENSE OF
HUMOR.

WHEN ASKED
WHO THE STAR
OF THOSE KINDS
OF SHOWS IS,
THE ANSWER IS
OBTAININGLY "THE
COMEDIAN."



YOU KNOW
HOW THERE
ARE RADIO
SHOWS
HOSTED BY
COMEDIANS,
RIGHT?



BUT
IN MY
CASE...

...SHOWS
LED BY A
RADIO
PERSON-
ALITY...



THEN
THERE'S
INTELLECTUALS.
FOR EXAMPLE,
SHOWS ABOUT
A CRITIC
DISCUSSING
MOVIES.

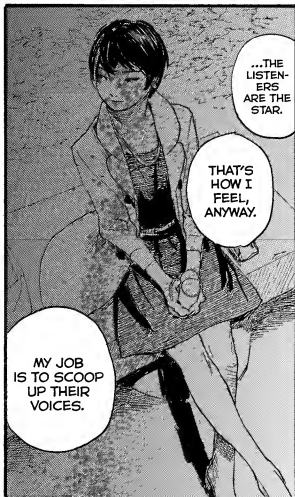
THE
CRITIC IS
THE STAR.
ALL THAT
MATTERS IS
THAT THEIR
DISCUSSION
IS INTEREST-
ING.



THE
LISTENERS
ARE TUNING
IN FOR THE
COMEDIAN'S
SENSE OF
HUMOR.

THE
QUALITY
OF THEMES
FOR A SUB-
MISSIONS
SEGMENT
HAS A BIG
IMPACT ON
THE QUALITY
OVERALL,
RIGHT?

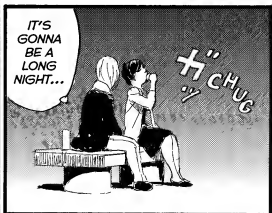
EVEN
WITHOUT ANY
PARTICIPATION
FROM THE
AUDIENCE, THE
SHOW CAN
STAND ON
ITS OWN.



...THE
LISTEN-
ERS
ARE THE
STAR.

THAT'S
HOW I
FEEL,
ANYWAY.

MY JOB
IS TO SCOOP
UP THEIR
VOICES.



IT'S
GONNA
BE A
LONG
NIGHT...

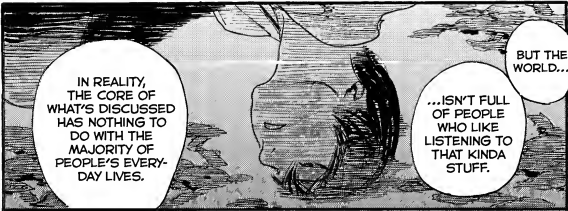
11°
CHUG



RADIO
REIGNS
SUPREME
IN THAT
SENSE.

SCANDALS
THAT CAN'T BE
DISCUSSED ON
TV, RISQUÉ
JOKES THAT
BARELY MEET
BROADCAST
CODE...

FOR SHOWS
HOSTED BY
COMEDIANS AND
INTELLECTUALS,
PEOPLE EXPECT
THE CORE OF
THE SHOW TO BE
THE INFORMATION
THAT'S DELIV-
ERED.



IN REALITY,
THE CORE OF
WHAT'S DISCUSSED
HAS NOTHING TO
DO WITH THE
MAJORITY OF
PEOPLE'S EVERY-
DAY LIVES.

BUT THE
WORLD...

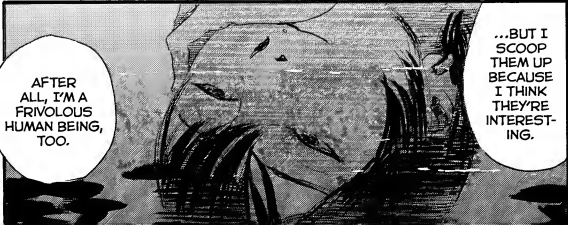
...ISN'T FULL
OF PEOPLE
WHO LIKE
LISTENING TO
THAT KINDA
STUFF.



THOSE
ARE THE KINDS
OF TOPICS MY
LISTENERS
LIKE TO SHARE.
THEY'RE ALL
FRIVOLOUS
TOPICS WITHOUT
A SHRED OF
NEWS RELE-
VANCE...

SURPRISES
SPRUNG
BY BOY-
FRIENDS
THAT
CREEPED
GIRLS
OUT,

THOUGHTS
ON PEOPLE
WHO TAKE
YAKITORI
OFF THE
SKEWER
BEFORE
EATING...



AFTER
ALL, I'M A
FRIVOLOUS
HUMAN BEING,
TOO.

...BUT I
SCOOP
THEM UP
BECAUSE
I THINK
THEY'RE
INTEREST-
ING.



CAN
SOMEONE LIKE
YOU, A WALKING
BROADCAST
ACCIDENT,
UNDERSTAND
HOW THOSE
FRIVOLOUS
PEOPLE
FEEL?



IT'S NOT
A COGNATE
SORT OF
ENTERTAIN-
ING.



IN
YOUR
CASE,
KODA-
SAN...

...YOUR
SHOW IS
ENTERTAINING
IN ITS OWN
RIGHT, BUT...
HOW DO I
PUT IT?



AM I REMI
HIRANO* OR
SOMETHING?

*A CHEF AND TV PERSONALITY WITH A
PENCHANT FOR FLIRTS ON AIR.



DO YOU HAVE THAT SORT OF EMPATHY TO COALESCE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE?

THE SAME GOES FOR MY LISTENERS. THEY'RE STRUGGLING TO GET BY EVERY DAY.

POP TO IT

AND THAT'S WHY THEY TRY TO CHEER UP ALL THE OTHER PEOPLE LIKE THEM.

Y'KNOW HOW PEOPLE SAY THINGS LIKE, "I WOULD'VE KILLED MYSELF LONG AGO IF IT WEREN'T FOR DOWNTOWN."

I MEAN, A COMEDIAN...

YOU'RE STILL NOT DONE?

...ISN'T SOMETHING YOU JUST BECOME ON A WHIM.

THE CRASS JOKES THOSE KINDS OF PEOPLE TELL HAVE A SORT OF DARK REALISM TO THEM, RIGHT?

PEOPLE WHO BECOME COMEDIANS DO SO BECAUSE THEY CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT COMEDY.



THAT'S RIGHT.

YOUR DEFINITION OF "OKAY" IS ABOUT AS BLOATED AS YOUR BLOOD ALCOHOL LEVEL!

IS THIS HAG INVINCIBLE, OR WHAT?!

BUT IT'S OKAY. I'LL PROBABLY FORGET ABOUT IT ALL TOMORROW.

I'VE LET THE BOOZE TAKE THE WHEEL AND SWITCHED TO FULL LECTURE MODE!



WHOA, HANG ON A SECOND!

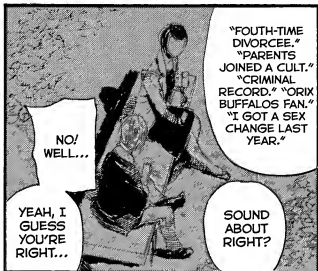
AREN'T YOU JUST USING YOUR DRUNKENNESS TO LECTURE ME?

WAS THAT SHOW REALLY SUBSTANTIAL ENOUGH FOR YOU TO MAKE ANY SORT OF ASSESSMENT OF MY CHARACTER?



I THINK
THE ONLY
TOPICS YOU
COULD PRE-
TEND TO BE
INTERESTED
IN ARE LIKE...

I
DUNNO
ABOUT
THAT.



NO!
WELL...

YEAH, I
GUESS
YOU'RE
RIGHT...

"FOURTH-TIME
DIVORCEE."
"PARENTS
JOINED A CULT."
"CRIMINAL
RECORD." "ORIX
BUFFALOS FAN."
"I GOT A SEX
CHANGE LAST
YEAR."

SOUND
ABOUT
RIGHT?



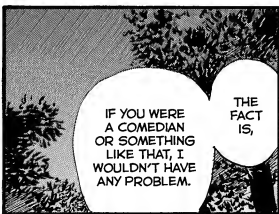
"girl trying
to hint, is
it that fun
drinking
alone?"

I MEAN,
REGARDLESS
IF I'M ACTUALLY
INTERESTED IN
MY LISTENERS
OR NOT, I CAN
AT LEAST
PRETEND
I AM.

IF IT'S
FOR WORK,
ANYWAY!



DID YOU
REALLY THINK
YOU'D GET BY
WITHOUT ANYONE
CHEWING YOU
OUT?



IF YOU WERE
A COMEDIAN
OR SOMETHING
LIKE THAT, I
WOULDN'T HAVE
ANY PROBLEM.

THE
FACT
IS,



...AND
THIS IS
WHAT YOU
HAVE TO
SHOW
FOR IT?

HOST
YOUR OWN
SHOW ON
THE COMP-
ANY'S DIME,
ALBERT LATE
NIGHT...

BUT THE
FACT THAT
YOU, AN
AMATEUR
OFF THE
STREET,

...AND YOU
MAKE IT SOUND
LIKE I USED MY
CONNECTIONS
TO GET THAT
SLOT AND AM
USING IT FOR
MY OWN SELF-
GRATIFICATION
OR SOME-
THING...

I'VE
BEEN LIS-
TENING
TO YOU
RANT...



...LIKE
I GIVE A
SHIT!



ALSO, YOU'RE
ASSUMING SOME
REAL BULLSHIT,
LIKE I'M NOT
INTERESTED IN
OTHER PEOPLE
BECAUSE I'M
SOME UNFEELING
JESTER, BUT
YOU COULDN'T
BE MORE OFF
THE MARK!

...BUT I'LL
HAVE YOU
KNOW EVERY-
THING UP UNTIL
NOW HAS ALL
BEEN MATO-
SAN'S IDEA!

THOUGH
EVEN I THINK
IT'S KIND OF
EMBARRASS-
ING TO ADMIT.



...BUT I'M
SURE AS
HELL NOT!

I'VE GOT
MY HANDS
FULL AS IT
IS, GOD
DAMN IT!

I'M SURE
YOU MUST
BE LIVING
EASY AS A
POPULAR
DJ...

NEED-
LESS
TO SAY,
ALSO MY
FAULT.

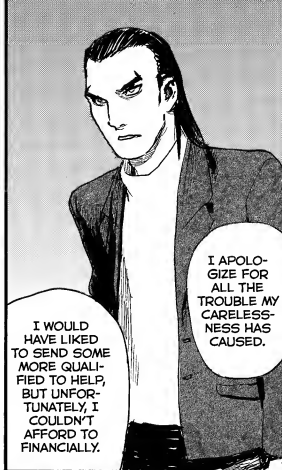
AND I
HAVE TO
PAY TO HAVE
A TOTAL
STRANG-
ER'S ENTIRE
APARTMENT
CLEANED!

THAT'S
ON ME,
THOUGH.

I COULD
LOSE MY
PART-TIME
JOB ANY
DAY NOW!

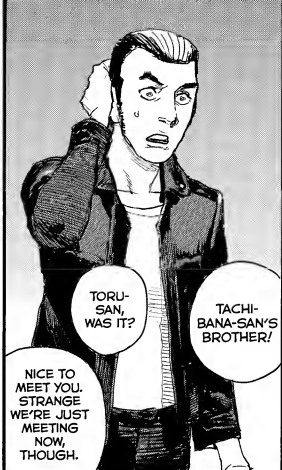
*MEANT TO DENY,
BUT ENDED UP AFFIRMING.

HOW DO YOU
EXPECT ME TO
GIVE A FLYING
FUCK ABOUT
PEOPLE I
DON'T EVEN
KNOW?!



I WOULD
HAVE LIKED
TO SEND SOME
MORE QUALI-
FIED TO HELP,
BUT UNFOR-
TUNATELY, I
COULDN'T
AFFORD TO
FINANCIALLY.

I APOLO-
GIZE FOR
ALL THE
TROUBLE MY
CARELESS-
NESS HAS
CAUSED.



TORU-
SAN,
WAS IT?

TACHI-
BANA-SAN'S
BROTHER!

NICE TO
MEET YOU.
STRANGE
WE'RE JUST
MEETING
NOW,
THOUGH.



...NO.

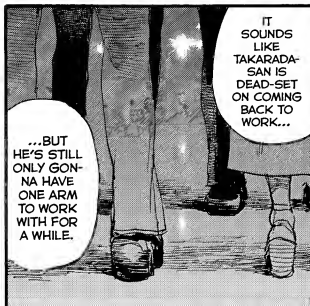
COME,
MAKIE.
YOU'RE NO
LONGER
NEEDED
HERE.

HOWEVER,
AFTER DIS-
CUSSING IT
WITH TAKARADA-
SAMA, WE WERE
ABLE TO WORK
SOMETHING
OUT.



THAT'S A
LITTLE TOO
SUDDEN.

HANG
ON A
SEC-
OND.



...BUT
HE'S STILL
ONLY GON-
NA HAVE
ONE ARM
TO WORK
WITH FOR
A WHILE.

IT
SOUNDS
LIKE
TAKARADA-
SAN IS
DEAD-SET
ON COMING
BACK TO
WORK...





HE
FEELS
SORT OF
RESPON-
SIBLE FOR
WHAT HAP-
PENED.

I
TALKED
TO THE
OWNER OF THE
SRI LANKA
IMPORT
STORE.



NO NEED
TO WORRY
ABOUT
WORKERS,
NAKAHARA-
KUN.

?



PLUS,
YOUR
SISTER
IS AN EX-
CELLENT
WORKER.

I PLANNED
TO BRING UP
THE PROS-
PECT OF
KEEPING HER
ON AS A PART-
TIMER WITH
TAKARADA-
SAN EVEN
AFTER HE
RETURNED.



GET
A CLUE,
OLD
MAN!

you
monster...

SO, HE
OFFERED
TO SEND
OVER TWO
HELPERS.

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO KUNIO
YANAGAWA?!
WASN'T HE
IN THE SAME
HOSPITAL
AS YOU?

THAT
REMINDS ME,
TAKARADA-
SAN...

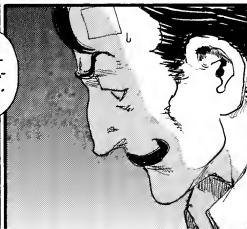
IT'S
GOOD
TO HAVE
A STORE
THAT CAN'T
SAY NO TO
A LOYAL
CUSTOMER.

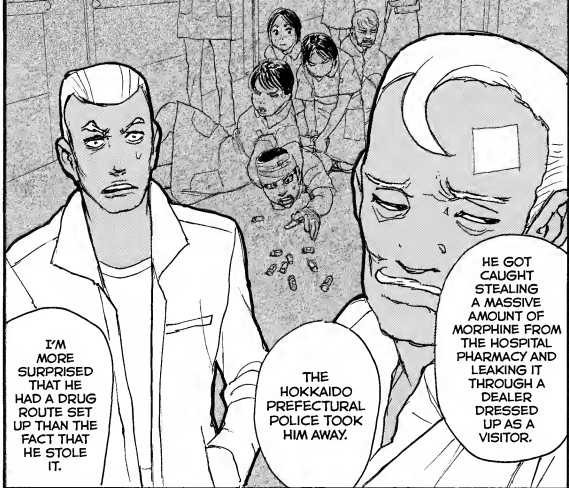


HUH...?
DON'T
TELL ME
HE...

IT'S A
SHAME WHAT
HAPPENED,
REALLY...

YANA-
GAWA-
KUN...

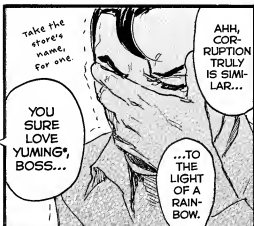




I'M
MORE
SURPRISED
THAT HE
HAD A DRUG
ROUTE SET
UP THAN THE
FACT THAT
HE STOLE
IT.

THE
HOKKAIDO
PREFECTURAL
POLICE TOOK
HIM AWAY.

HE GOT
CAUGHT
STEALING
A MASSIVE
AMOUNT OF
MORPHINE FROM
THE HOSPITAL
PHARMACY AND
LEAKING IT
THROUGH A
DEALER
DRESSED
UP AS A
VISITOR.



Take the
store's
name,
for one.

YOU
SURE
LOVE
YUMING*,
BOSS...

AHH,
COR-
RUPTION
TRULY IS SIMI-
LAR...

...TO
THE
LIGHT
OF A
RAIN-
BOW.

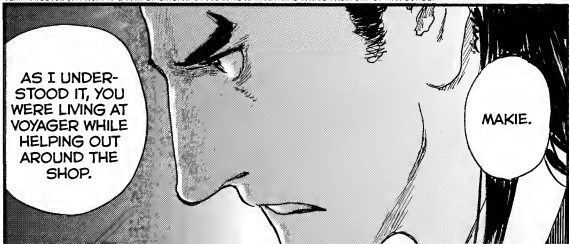


I wonder
who'll get
carried
off by
the police
next.

UH...
YEAH.

HE WAS
SUCH A
PURE-
HEARTED
BOY, TOO.
HE NEVER
COMPLAINED
WHEN I FELT
HIS BUM. HOW
COULD THIS
HAPPEN...?

*YUMI MATSUOTOYA, A PROLIFIC JAPANESE SINGER. TAKARADA IS REFERENCING LYRICS FROM ONE OF HER SONGS.



AS I UNDER-
STOOD IT, YOU
WERE LIVING AT
VOYAGER WHILE
HELPING OUT
AROUND THE
SHOP.

MAKIE.



...WERE
YOU GOING
JUST NOW?

BUT
WHERE...



That's
a hell
of a
time.

IS THIS
BANGKOK
RIGHT
AFTER THE
COUP OR
WHAT?



FRIENDS?

EVEN
IF THAT
WERE THE
CASE, I
DON'T
RECALL
GIVING YOU
PERMISSION
TO GO OUT
AT NIGHT.

YOU?



...

A
FRIEND'S
HOUSE.



YOUR
SISTER WAS
GOING TO
STAY AT
MY PLACE
TONIGHT.

TACHI-
BANA-
SAN.



UM...
COME
AGAIN?



